

Amendments to the claims:

Please cancel claim 17 without prejudice or disclaimer. Please also amend claims 1, 13 and 21 as indicated below. The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of making an alignment layer on a wall of a liquid crystal cell, comprising imparting a property to a layer of a material on the wall, said property being that when liquid crystal molecules are placed on the layer they will material on the wall in use of the cell adopt a preferred alignment,

the method comprising exposing the material to unpolarised or circularly polarized radiation from an oblique direction,

wherein the said property of the alignment layer imparts further includes imparting a preferred tilt as well as a preferred azimuthal alignment to such liquid crystal molecules,

wherein multiple local zones of the material are exposed to the radiation, the oblique angle of the radiation being uniform within each local zone but different between two or more zones, to which the material is exposed is zonewise patterned in one irradiation step by interposing a microelement array between the source of the radiation and the material to generate the locally different oblique radiation in one irradiation step, and such liquid crystal molecules are zonewise aligned.

2. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the irradiation energy, measured normal to the radiation, is less than 2 J/cm².

3. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the radiation is ultraviolet.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the alignment is such that the longitudinal axis of the liquid crystal molecules is in the plane including the normal to the layer and the direction of the radiation.

5. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the imparted tilt exceeds 45° to the plane of the layer.

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 5, wherein the imparted tilt exceeds 75°.

7. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the material is substantially homeotropically orienting.

8. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the angle of incidence φ of the radiation to the normal to the layer is within the range $5^\circ \leq \varphi < 70^\circ$.

9. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the angle of incidence φ of the radiation to the normal to the layer is $> 45^\circ$.

10. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the material is cross-linked by the irradiation.

Claims 11-12 (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A liquid crystal cell wall bearing a layer of material, wherein the material has been exposed to unpolarised or circularly polarised radiation from an oblique direction, wherein multiple local zones of the material have been exposed to the radiation, the oblique angle of the radiation being uniform within each local zone but different between two or more zones, to which the material was exposed was zonewise patterned in one irradiation step by interposing a microelement array between the source of the radiation and the material to generate the locally different oblique radiation in one irradiation step, and wherein the material can impart an alignment to liquid crystal molecules if placed on the material, wherein liquid crystal molecules placed on the material would be zonewise aligned.

14. (Original) A liquid crystal cell of which at least one wall in contact with liquid crystal material is according to claim 13.

15. (Original) A liquid crystal cell according to claim 14, which is vertically aligned nematic.

16. (Original) A liquid crystal cell according to claim 14, which is hybrid aligned nematic.

Claim 17 (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the microelement array is a microlens array.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the microelement array is a microprism array.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the microelement array is a hologram element.

21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the microelement array is an array of micro-mirrors light switches.